

DETAILED ACTION

EXAMINER'S COMMENT

Figures 1A, 1B and 1C should be designated by a legend such as --Prior Art-- because only that which is old is illustrated. See MPEP § 608.02(g). Corrected drawings in compliance with 37 CFR 1.121(d) are required. The replacement sheet(s) should be labeled "Replacement Sheet" in the page header (as per 37 CFR 1.84(c)) so as not to obstruct any portion of the drawing figures. If the changes are not accepted by the examiner, the applicant will be notified and informed of any required corrective action in the next Office action. The objection to the drawings will not be held in abeyance.

EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT

An examiner's amendment to the record appears below. Should the changes and/or additions be unacceptable to applicant, an amendment may be filed as provided by 37 CFR 1.312. To ensure consideration of such an amendment, it MUST be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee.

The application has been amended as follows:

In Claim 16: On line 1, change "of claim 15" to — of claim 12 — .

Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 1, 5, 6, 8, 12, 16-19, 21, 23-26, 30, 35, 36, 39 and 40 are allowed.

With respect to independent claims 1 and 12, the prior art does not disclose, in the claimed environment, an excrement treatment apparatus comprising a plurality of helical blade

stirrers with each stirrer comprising pluvimixing rings carrying blocks for loosing degraded organic material. The Kitsui references represent the closest prior art. Each reference discloses the use of a treatment apparatus comprising helical blade stirrers divided into two parts with helical directions in a reverse orientation. However, Kitsui does not describe the use of pluvimixing rings comprising a plurality of blocks located on the outer sides of each helical blade stirrer. The stirring blades 12 disclosed by Kitsui are attached to a rotation shaft, but are not located on the outer sides of each helical blade stirrer and are not in the shape of rings.

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to NATHAN A. BOWERS whose telephone number is (571)272-8613. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday 7 AM to 4 PM.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Jill Warden can be reached on (571) 272-1267. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/William H. Beisner/
Primary Examiner, Art Unit 1797

/Nathan A Bowers/
Examiner, Art Unit 1797